

Social Security in 1994. When I wrote this almost 10 years ago, I was simply acknowledging what was evident to the actuaries of Social Security. Because we know how many people are paying into Social Security, and we can estimate the cost of future benefits from what has been paid in, the looming insolvency of the program was very clear then. It is even more clear today. Yet a crisis that is imminent in the eyes of an actuary looks like a long way off to many politicians, and as a result Congress has ignored and delayed action on what is probably this country's most serious long-term financial challenge.

In just 10 years, we will need \$100 billion from other sources to make up \$100 billion, that is 5 percent of what will be coming in 10 years from now from the total income tax revenues, we are going to need that much in addition to what is coming in on Social Security and Medicare taxes to pay promised benefits. It has been frustrating at times, but we have worked for more than a decade trying to focus attention on fixing Social Security.

I introduced my first Social Security bill back in 1994. In fact, I wrote it while I was still chairman of the Senate taxation committee in Michigan. Tomorrow, I will offer my sixth legislation that has been scored by the actuaries to keep Social Security solvent. The good news is, I think awareness has increased. There is a greater appreciation and an acknowledgment that Social Security is going broke. Today, most Members are aware of the problem, even if there is still reluctance to tackle it.

President Bush's support in the 2000 campaign, I think, moved us a long ways toward a greater American understanding of the seriousness of the problem, and tomorrow I will introduce my bipartisan Retirement Security Act that has been scored by the Social Security actuaries to keep Social Security solvent and restore its tremendous support for retirees in the United States. Workers could voluntarily devote 2.5 percent of their income for a start from their payroll taxes. It would be voluntary. And workers would own the money in the accounts, which can be put in well-diversified investments. In our bill, we guarantee that the individuals that opt for these personally-owned accounts will earn as much as those that opt not to go into that particular investment. The government would supplement the accounts of low-income workers to help build up those accounts for future retirement savings. People would continue to receive government benefits, as in the current system, as part of their retirement income, but those participating in the private account would have their government benefits reduced to reflect the money that goes into their private accounts. But, again, it would be insured.

To ensure fairness for women, a married couple's account contributions would be divided equally between spouses. My bill also increases the wid-

ow's/widower's benefit to 110 percent of the higher earning spouse's benefit and would give retirement credits to spouses who stay at home to care for young children.

In conclusion, there are some important costs to the bill which eliminates \$10 billion in unfunded liabilities. It calls for a \$900 billion loan over the next 20 years from government to Social Security in addition to repaying the trust funds that have been borrowed from Social Security and this will be repaid after the program becomes solvent. It also slows down the increase in benefits for the highest earning retirees. It does not, however, change benefits for those who have already retired or are close to retirement.

Action to preserve and strengthen Social Security is long overdue. By acting now, we can reduce the cost of restoring Social Security for our children and our grandchildren. By increasing the return earned on Social Security surpluses, we can make the transition to a better system cheaper and easier. The Retirement Security Act is my proposal along with my eight cosponsors to move forward.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I ask permission to speak out of order and to take the time of the gentleman from Illinois.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS, LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as the second anniversary of September 11 approaches, I rise this evening to pay tribute to our Nation's fallen firefighters, law enforcement officers and emergency medical service personnel. Mr. Speaker, every day public service officers protect our families and possessions from fire, they keep our streets safe and are the first to respond to an emergency. Across this Nation, our public safety officers are dedicated and prepared. They truly embody the values and spirit that make America the great Nation that it is. These men and women are dedicated, and when we

call on them, they risk their lives for all of us. Our firefighters, law enforcement officers and EMS workers are truly our hometown heroes. However, all too often these heroes must give their lives in the line of duty.

For the family of these brave souls, Congress created the Public Safety Officers Benefit. Since its inception 25 years ago, this important benefit has provided surviving families with financial assistance during their desperate times of need. However, a glitch in the law prevents some families from receiving the assistance. Heart attacks and strokes are among the greatest threat to public safety officers, especially firefighters. In fact, almost half of all firefighter deaths in the line of duty are due to heart attacks and strokes. Fighting fire is dangerous, exhausting and extremely stressful work. Indeed, a firefighter's chances of suffering a heart attack or stroke greatly increases when he or she puts on the gear and rushes into a building to fight a fire. Likewise, law enforcement officers, correction officers and EMS workers face daily situations that put stress and strain on their heart. Imagine the scenario where, while fighting a house fire, a company of firefighters tragically loses two of its members. One is killed by a piece of falling debris. The other dies of a heart attack in the same building. Under current law, the family of the firefighter who suffered the fatal blow to the head receives their benefit, but the family of the heart attack victim receives nothing.

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It is wrong that these families are denied this benefit when their loved ones are suffering the loss of a loved one in our communities.

A constituent of mine, Mike Williams, of Bunnlevel, North Carolina, who works for the Office of State Fire Marshal, alerted me to this glitch in the law after Ms. Deborah Brooks, the widow of Thomas Brooks of Lumberton, North Carolina, was denied benefits because of this technicality in the law. Mr. Brooks, a master firefighter with the Lumberton Fire Department, tragically died of a heart attack after returning from several calls on an evening shift. They found him dead the next morning.

As part of his duties with the state fire marshal, Mike helps families file for public safety officer benefits, and he has received many benefit rejection letters from the U.S. Department of Justice. This rejection letter in Thomas Brooks' case was one too many. Mike wrote to me and asked that we investigate the situation. We tried with other Members of this Congress to correct that technicality in the law administratively. We found out it could not be done.

During the last Congress, I, along with my colleagues, introduced the Hometown Heroes Benefit Act to correct this technicality in the Public

Safety Officer Benefit. This bipartisan piece of legislation will allow the families of public safety officers who were killed by a heart attack or stroke while on duty within 24 hours after participating in a training exercise or responding to an emergency situation to receive the benefits that they are due.

Last year, the Committee on the Judiciary and the full House unanimously passed it. Unfortunately, we were not able to move the bill through the United States Senate before adjourning, despite the strong support from several Senators of both parties.

Earlier this year, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), and I introduced the Hometown Heroes Survival Benefit Act. The United States Senate has already unanimously passed a Senate bill, S. 459, a companion bill introduced by Senators LEAHY and GRAHAM.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 929 is the kind of bipartisan legislation that we should be working on in this House. As of this afternoon, we have 273 cosponsors. I will remind my colleagues it takes 218 in this House to pass a bill. Both Democrats and Republicans are on board. More cosponsors are on the way.

I urge all of my colleagues to continue to sponsor H.R. 919, and I ask the House leadership to put this bill to a vote. It will pass unanimously. During this time of increasing awareness and concern regarding the threat of terrorism, we are calling on our public safety officers to work longer and harder than ever before. Our hometown heroes deserve to know that we support and appreciate their extraordinary bravery and heroism.

As we take time to remember those who were killed or injured in the attacks on September 11 this week, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 919 and let public safety officers know we will continue to stand with them and with their families. We can do no less.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CHANGING FARM SUBSIDY AND TARIFF PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, our good friend and very able U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Robert Zoellick, about to represent America at the WTO trade summit in Cancun this week, should be given a message and a mission. The message comes from this Member of Congress, a strong

supporter of trade liberalization, one of the farm-state Members from the Great Plains and Midwest Caucus that together has been a strong and crucial force for trade liberalization over the years.

Mr. Speaker, here is the message with which we should arm Ambassador Zoellick on the subject of agricultural trade:

First, we must harmonize, we must have harmonization. That is to say, developing countries must agree to sharp reductions in their tariffs on agriculture imports, and developed countries like the European Union countries and Japan must cut their higher production subsidies proportionally more than the U.S. Large agricultural exporters classified as developing countries, like Brazil, also must steeply cut their agricultural subsidy.

Second, we must have an end to the large agricultural export subsidies of the European Union; and America can end its small export subsidies, which are used occasionally as a shot across the bow of the EU.

Third, we must insist that the European Union dramatically restructure its agriculture support programs by a greater delinking of subsidy programs from production at the same time as the U.S. proportionally makes the same adjustment in our smaller level of subsidy.

Mr. Speaker, the large subsidy and tariff barriers of the European Union and Japan, but also the United States, do more damage to the economies and domestic food production efforts of the world's developing countries than the combination of all the foreign aid programs of the developed countries and their NGOs. In the meantime, the American taxpayers and the taxpayers and food consumers of European Union countries pay a huge cost for the direct and hidden agricultural subsidies primarily caused by the EU's common agricultural policy.

Mr. Speaker, either we have that kind of dramatic change in foreign farm subsidy and tariff programs matched proportionally by our own, or Ambassador Zoellick should walk away from Cancun until the Europeans get the message. Let them squirm with the cost of their cap under an enlarged EU. American farmers and our small agribusiness firms will accept reform, but they are disgusted with the intransigence of the EU and the big and unfair disadvantage they face from the EU over export markets.

Ambassador Zoellick should know we demand a real substantial change from the EU, Japan, and other countries. We need to walk away from any inadequate or lopsided trade deal that is detrimental to the natural competitiveness of our farm sector; or, alternatively, the reliable pro-trade farm state block of Members will walk away from any further multilateral trade agreements Ambassador Zoellick might bring us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF DR. JEWEL LIMAR PRESTAGE: TEACHER, MENTOR, SCHOLAR, AND PUBLIC SERVANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding American, Dr. Jewel Limar Prestage. Dr. Jewel Prestage is one of the first African American women to earn a Ph.D. She earned it in political science in the United States, and through her work and contributions since, has become one of the most important women of our times.

Through teaching, mentoring, research and service, Jewel Prestage has had a profound influence in the political science discipline, in the political life of our country and on the lives of the thousands of students with whom she has associated over the years. Her talent, dedication, and good works must not go unacknowledged or unappreciated.

As a distinguished professor of political science, Jewel Prestage has lectured at numerous institutions of higher education. Her service at two Historically Black Universities in the South, however, anchored her career.

For 18 years, Dr. Prestage served as the Chair of the Political Science Department at Southern University. During her tenure, this academic department became the nation's leading catalyst for the development of African American Ph.D.s in political science.

After 33 years of dedicated service, in 1989 Jewel Prestage retired from the Southern University system as the dean of its Public Policy School and of its Urban Affairs School. However, her retirement was short-lived, as Jewel Prestage joined the political science faculty at Prairie View A&M University, where she eventually became dean of the Benjamin Banneker Honors College. At Prairie View, she continued her impressive record of guiding students toward postgraduate education. In September 2002, she retired after a stellar academic career that spanned 46 years.

Jewel Prestage has been a pioneer in academic research in the area of race, gender, and politics. She was the first person to pursue research that focused on African American women legislators and the first to offer the theory of marginality to describe the political behavior of African American women.

Her book, "A Portrait of Marginality," coauthored with Dr. Marianne Githens, has become the seminal work on minority women and politics and is